

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY / MIDDLE EAST UPDATE
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1. [Clinton at Senate Hearing on Benghazi Terrorist Attack \(01-23-2013\)](#)

On January 23, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton testified on Capitol Hill regarding the September 2012 attack on the U.S. Mission in Benghazi.

Following is her opening statement to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. This statement closely matched her opening statement to the House Foreign Affairs Committee later in the day.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, both older and new. I'm very grateful for this opportunity and I thank you very much for your patience to give me the chance to come and address these issues with you.

As both the Chairman and the Ranking Member have said, the terrorist attacks in Benghazi on September 11th, 2012 that claimed the lives of four brave Americans – Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and Glen Doherty – are part of a broader strategic challenge to the United States and our partners in North Africa. Today, I want briefly to offer some context for this challenge, share what we've learned, how we are protecting our people, and where we can work together to not only honor our fallen colleagues, but continue to champion America's interests and values.

Any clear-eyed examination of this matter must begin with this sobering fact: Since 1988, there have been 19 Accountability Review Boards investigating attacks on American diplomats and their facilities. Benghazi joins a long list of tragedies for our Department, for other agencies, and for America: hostages taken in Tehran in 1979, our Embassy and Marine barracks bombed in Beirut in 1983, Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia in 1996, our embassies in East Africa in 1998, consulate staff

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murdered in Jeddah in 2004, the Khost attack in 2009, and too many others. Since 1977, 65 American diplomatic personnel have been killed by terrorists.

Now of course, the list of attacks foiled, crises averted, and lives saved is even longer. We should never forget that our security professionals get it right more than 99 percent of the time, against difficult odds all over the world. That's why, like my predecessors, I literally trust them with my life.

Let's also remember that administrations of both parties, in partnership with Congress, have made concerted and good faith efforts to learn from these attacks and deaths to implement recommendations from the review boards, to seek the necessary resources, and to do better in protecting our people from what has become constantly evolving threats. That is the least that the men and women who serve our country deserve. It's what, again, we are doing now with your help. As Secretary, I have no higher priority and no greater responsibility.

As I have said many times, I take responsibility, and nobody is more committed to getting this right. I am determined to leave the State Department and our country safer, stronger, and more secure.

Now, taking responsibility meant moving quickly in those first uncertain hours and days to respond to the immediate crisis, but also to further protect our people and posts in high-threat areas across the region and the world. It meant launching an independent investigation to determine exactly what happened in Benghazi and to recommend steps for improvement. And it meant intensifying our efforts to combat terrorism and figure out effective ways to support the emerging democracies in North Africa and beyond.

Let me share some of the lessons we've learned, the steps we've taken, and the work we continue to do.

First, let's start on the night of September 11th itself and those difficult early days. I directed our response from the State Department, stayed in close contact with officials from across our government and the Libyan Government. So I saw firsthand what Ambassador Pickering and former Chairman Mike Mullen called timely and exceptional coordination; no delays in decision making, no denials of support from Washington or from our military. And I want to echo the Review Board's praise for the valor and courage of our people on the ground, especially the security professionals in Benghazi and Tripoli. The board said the response saved American lives in real time, and it did.

The very next morning, I told the American people that heavily armed militants assaulted our compound, and I vowed to bring them to justice. And I stood with President Obama in the Rose Garden as he spoke of an act of terror.

It's also important to recall that in that same period, we were seeing violent attacks on our embassies in Cairo, Sana'a, Tunis, Khartoum, as well as large protests outside many other posts where thousands of our diplomats serve. So I immediately ordered a review of our security posture around the world, with particular scrutiny for high-threat posts. I asked the Department of Defense to join Interagency Security Assessment Teams and to dispatch hundreds of additional Marine Security Guards. I named the first Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for High Threat Posts so missions in dangerous places get the attention they need. And we reached out to Congress to help address physical vulnerabilities, including risk from fire, and to hire additional Diplomatic Security personnel.

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Second, even as we took these steps, I hurried to appoint the Accountability Review Board led by Ambassador Pickering and Admiral Mullen so we could more fully understand from objective, independent examination what went wrong and how to fix it.

I have accepted every one of their recommendations. I asked the Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources to lead a task force to ensure that all 29 of them are implemented quickly and completely, as well as pursuing additional steps above and beyond the recommendations.

I also pledged in my letter to you last month that implementation would begin, and it has. Our task force started by translating the recommendations into 64 specific action items. They were assigned to bureaus and offices with clear timelines for completion. Eighty-five percent are now on track to be completed by the end of March; a number are already completed. And we will use this opportunity to take a top-to-bottom look and rethink how we make decisions on where, when and whether people operate in high-threat areas, and then how we respond to threats and crises.

We are initiating an annual High Threat Post Review chaired by the Secretary of State, and ongoing reviews by the Deputy Secretaries, to ensure that pivotal questions about security do reach the highest levels. We will regularize protocols for sharing information with Congress. These are designed to increase the safety of our diplomats and development experts and reduce the chances of another Benghazi happening again.

We've also been moving forward on a third front: addressing the broader strategic challenge in North Africa and the wider region, because, after all, Benghazi did not happen in a vacuum. The Arab revolutions have scrambled power dynamics and shattered security forces across the region. Instability in Mali has created an expanding safe haven for terrorists who look to extend their influence and plot further attacks of the kind we saw just last week in Algeria.

And let me offer our deepest condolences to the families of the Americans and all the people from many nations who were killed and injured in that recent hostage crisis. We are in close touch with the Government of Algeria. We stand ready to provide assistance. We are seeking to gain a fuller understanding of what took place so we can work together with Algerians and others to prevent such terrorist attacks in the future.

Concerns about terrorism and instability in North Africa are of course not new. They have been a top priority for the entire Administration's national security team. But we have been facing a rapidly changing threat environment, and we have had to keep working at ways to increase pressure on al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and the other terrorist groups in the region.

In the first hours and days, I conferred with leaders – the President of Libya, Foreign Ministers of Tunisia and Morocco – and then I had a series of meetings at the United Nations General Assembly where there was a special meeting focused on Mali and the Sahel. In October, I flew to Algeria to discuss the fight against AQIM. In November, I sent Deputy Secretary Bill Burns to follow up in Algiers. And then in December, in my stead, he co-chaired an organization we started to respond to some of these threats: the Global Counterterrorism Forum, which was meeting in Abu Dhabi, as well as a meeting in Tunis of leaders working to build new democracies and reform security services.

We have focused on targeting al-Qaida's syndicate of terror – closing safe havens, cutting off finances, countering extremist ideology, slowing the flow of new recruits. And we continue to hunt the terrorists responsible for the attacks in Benghazi and are determined to bring them to justice. We

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are using our diplomatic and economic tools to support these emerging democracies and to strengthen security forces and help provide a path away from extremism.

But let me underscore the importance of the United States continuing to lead in the Middle East, in North Africa, and around the world. We've come a long way in the past four years, and we cannot afford to retreat now. When America is absent, especially from unstable environments, there are consequences. Extremism takes root; our interests suffer; our security at home is threatened.

That's why I sent Chris Stevens to Benghazi in the first place. Nobody knew the dangers better than Chris, first during the revolution, then during the transition. A weak Libyan Government, marauding militias, terrorist groups; a bomb exploded in the parking lot of his hotel, but he did not waver. Because he understood it was critical for America to be represented there at that time.

Our men and women who serve overseas understand that we accept a level of risk to protect the country we love. And they represent the best traditions of a bold and generous nation. They cannot work in bunkers and do their jobs. So it is our responsibility to make sure they have the resources they need, and to do everything we can to reduce the risks.

For me, this is not just a matter of policy. It's personal. I stood next to President Obama as the Marines carried those flag-draped caskets off the plane at Andrews. I put my arms around the mothers and fathers, the sisters and brothers, the sons and daughters, and the wives left alone to raise their children.

It has been one of the great honors of my life to lead the men and women of the State Department and USAID. Nearly 70,000 serving here in Washington; more than 270 posts around the world. They get up and go to work every day, often in difficult and dangerous circumstances, because they believe, as we believe, the United States is the most extraordinary force for peace and progress the world has ever known.

And when we suffer tragedies overseas, as we have, the number of Americans applying to the Foreign Service actually increases. That tells us everything we need to know about what kind of patriots I'm talking about. They do ask what they can do for their country, and America is stronger for it.

So today, after four years in this job, traveling nearly a million miles, visiting 112 countries, my faith in our country and our future is stronger than ever. Every time that blue and white airplane carrying the words "United States of America" touches down in some far-off capital, I feel again the honor it is to represent the world's indispensable nation. And I am confident that, with your help, we will keep the United States safe, strong, and exceptional.

So I want to thank this committee for your partnership and your support of diplomats and development experts. You know the importance of the work they do day in and day out. You know that America's values and vital national security interests are at stake. And I appreciate what Ranking Member Corker just said: It is absolutely critical that this committee and the State Department, with your new Secretary and former Chairman, work together to really understand and address the resources, support, and changes that are needed to face what are increasingly complex threats.

I know you share my sense of responsibility and urgency, and while we all may not agree on everything, let's stay focused on what really matters: protecting our people and the country we love. And thank you for the support you personally have given to me over the last four years.

I now would be happy to answer your questions.

[Terrorist Attack in Benghazi: The Secretary of State's View](#)
Opening Remarks before the House Foreign Affairs Committee

2. Ambassador Rice at Security Council Debate on Middle East (01-23-2013)

Remarks by Ambassador Susan E. Rice, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, At a Security Council Open Debate on the Middle East, January 23, 2013

Thank you, Mr. President, and thank you, Special Coordinator Serry, for your briefing.

Mr. President, the terrorist attacks in the desert of Algeria, the threat posed by Iran and its nuclear program, the internal challenges with which Arab societies today are grappling to make their governments more democratic and more responsive to the needs of their people, all make the Middle East a region that must command our enduring attention and active engagement. Today, I will focus on the Palestinian question and the Syrian crisis.

The current financial crisis in the Palestinian territories is severe, and recent news of Saudi Arabia's generous \$100 million donation to the Palestinian Authority is welcome. We have made enormous investments to the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian people that we wish to be sustained, including through the immediate resumption of regular clearance revenue transfers. Over the years, no government has invested more in assistance to the Palestinians than the United States. We remain committed to supporting the Palestinian people.

Yet, as we all know, the November 29, 2012 vote in the General Assembly has not brought the Palestinians any closer to our common goal of achieving a state. As we have said repeatedly, the only way to establish a real Palestinian state is through the painstaking work of direct negotiations on final status issues, without preconditions, between the Israelis and Palestinians. UNGA Resolution 67/19 cannot be viewed as establishing terms of reference or as prejudging any final status issues, notably with respect to territory. These are simply inescapable facts. Thus, the United States remains fully committed to direct negotiations, and we will continue to work vigorously toward that end. We are consulting with the parties and international partners on the way forward, and we are underscoring that every step taken must aim to reduce tensions and create a climate for peace. The Quartet envoys met earlier this month in Jordan to discuss the measures necessary to create a positive atmosphere conducive to future negotiations. This meeting followed U.S. Special Envoy David Hale's engagement with Israeli, Palestinian, Jordanian, Egyptian, and Arab League leaders to advance Middle East peace and security – including by maintaining and strengthening the Gaza cease-fire.

Throughout our engagement, we have reiterated our longstanding opposition to Israel's West Bank settlement activity, as well as construction in East Jerusalem, which run counter to the cause of peace. Construction in the E-1 area would be especially damaging to efforts to achieve a two-state solution, and we have urged Israeli leaders to reconsider these unilateral decisions and to exercise restraint. For decades, the United States has not accepted the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlement activity, and we oppose any efforts to legalize outposts. We will continue to urge leaders on both sides to avoid unilateral steps and provocations that make peace negotiations harder to resume.

The position of the United States regarding Palestinian status, including as reflected in our explanation of vote in connection with the adoption of General Assembly resolution 67/19, remains unchanged. The United States does not consider UNGA resolution 67/19 as bestowing Palestinian “statehood” or recognition. Only direct negotiations to settle final status issues will lead to this outcome. Therefore, in our view, any reference to the “State of Palestine” in the United Nations, including the use of the term “State of Palestine” on the placard in the Security Council or the use of the term “State of Palestine” in the invitation to this meeting or other arrangements for participation in this meeting, do not reflect acquiescence that “Palestine” is a state. This statement of our position shall apply to Palestinian participation in meetings of United Nations Security Council or in other UN meetings, regardless of whether the United States specifically intervenes on this matter in the future.

Mr. President, let me now turn to Syria, where the situation is dire and deteriorating. We have seen a sharp increase in indiscriminate attacks in the last month. In a small village outside of Homs, regime militia reportedly killed over 100 people last week, including entire families and numerous children. The regime’s airstrikes near the University of Aleppo killed 87, and attacks on health clinics and hospitals across the country have made it impossible for wounded civilians to seek help.

In the face of these mounting atrocities, we reiterate our utter condemnation of any attack directed against unarmed civilians. At all levels, those responsible for atrocities – no matter their allegiance – will be identified and held accountable. As the transition proceeds, we stand ready to assist Syria’s new leaders in their efforts to address issues of accountability and reconciliation. For this purpose, the United States will continue to support Syrian and international efforts to document evidence of atrocities committed by all sides for use in future accountability processes. The international community should also play a role in ensuring that any future domestic accountability processes have the expertise they need to meet international standards.

On the political and diplomatic front, I underscore my government’s strong support and gratitude for Joint Special Representative Brahimi’s efforts to find a durable solution to this crisis. Every member of this Council knows that a political transition would be the fastest and most effective way to end this horrific bloodshed. Thus, the United States will continue to engage with our partners both on and off this Council to support a meaningful political transition that meets the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people. In this regard, I reaffirm our commitment to the principles outlined in the Geneva Communiqué, including a transitional body with full executive powers, formed on the basis of mutual consent.

At the same time, we are continuing our efforts to support the Syrian Opposition Coalition as it works toward a more unified opposition that is able to start addressing the needs of the Syrian people now. We are supporting the Coalition’s Assistance Coordination Unit so that increased assistance gets to local councils providing basic services. In addition to over \$210 million in humanitarian assistance, the United States has contributed over \$50 million to bolster Syrian civil society, including its emerging leaders, to help them communicate, organize and prepare for an eventual political transition.

The burden is on all of us to help the millions of people displaced and in urgent need of life-saving assistance. There is no doubt that the tireless work of many UN agencies to deliver such aid, including UNRWA’s support for Palestinian refugees, has saved countless lives. We look forward to the UN’s pledging conference in Kuwait on January 30, and encourage states to increase their contributions to the two combined UN appeals. We also encourage UN agencies and donors to seek more opportunities for cross-border assistance to help Syrians in under-served areas and to work

with the Syrian Opposition Coalition's Assistance Coordination Unit to respond to needs on the ground.

We will continue helping Syria's neighbors – including Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq, and Jordan– to respond to the influx of refugees. We appreciate their generosity in affording shelter and services to nearly 630,000 refugees, a number sure to rise so long as Assad's forces continue their assault. We commend the Lebanese government's recent approval of a refugee response plan and encourage all neighboring governments to maintain open borders to those fleeing Assad's brutality.

Difficult days lie ahead, especially so long as Assad remains in power. We continue to support all Syrians within and outside the government who aim to bring an end to the bloody Assad regime and build a democratic and unified Syria in which the rule of law is respected. And we will continue to seek the valuable contributions of the international community towards this end.

Thank you, Mr. President.

[Ambassador Rice on Security Council Resolution on North Korea](#) (01-22-2013)

3. Spokesman: Sequestration Planning Hinders Pentagon (01-22-2013)

By Amaani Lyle
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Jan. 22, 2013 – Preparations under way for the looming threat of major across-the-board Pentagon spending cuts are “a drag on the department,” Pentagon Press Secretary George Little said today.

Congress recently passed legislation delaying the “sequestration” spending cuts until March 1, but \$500 billion in defense spending over 10 years still is at stake if Congress fails to agree on an alternative.

“We’re investing a great number of manhours, resources and intensive planning for sequestration, which we, of course, hope to avoid,” Little told reporters, and the fiscal ripples at the Pentagon expand far beyond Washington.

“When you have forward deployed service members who are asking about appropriations, that’s a signal to me that it’s weighing on their minds,” Little said. “When sequestration, ... continuing resolutions and appropriations become a discussion point in Kabul, ... Vicenza or on Okinawa, that is a sign that this debate in Washington is having a negative effect on troop morale.”

Little said the threat of sequestration already has affected morale, time management, planning and even his ability to discuss other matters in his meetings with reporters.

“It’s time to move beyond the ‘fiscal cliff’ and get a deal done,” he said.

As sequestration draws closer, Little noted, his level of awareness has increased with regard to service members’ worries about their families, their benefits and their ability to perform the mission.

“I think it is a justifiable concern on their part, and responsibility to address it rests with Congress,” he said.

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[Sequestration Will Hollow Out Force Fast, Dempsey Says](#)

[Fiscal Uncertainty Worries Service Members](#)

[Panetta: Fiscal Crisis Poses Biggest Immediate Threat to DOD](#)

[4. Obama Takes Oath of Office Recognizing Military Contributions \(01-21-2013\)](#)

By Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Jan. 21, 2013 – President Barack Obama took the ceremonial oath of office for his second term as the 44th U.S. president and commander in chief on the steps of the U.S. Capitol today, honoring the men and women in uniform who have preserved America’s freedoms throughout its history.

More than 5,000 military members – some participating in the Inaugural Parade, others playing musical accompaniment, firing artillery rounds into the sky or providing behind-the-scenes support – were among more than a half million people who gathered on the National Mall to watch Obama and Vice President Joe Biden enter their second term.

Recognizing the drawdown of forces in Afghanistan and the ramping down of more than a decade of conflict, Obama offered high praise during his inaugural address for U.S. service members, their contributions and sacrifices.

“Our brave men and women in uniform, tempered by the flames of battle, are unmatched in skill and courage,” he said. “Our citizens, seared by the memory of those we have lost, know too well the price that is paid for liberty. The knowledge of their sacrifice will keep us forever vigilant against those who would do us harm.”

Obama expressed hope for a more peaceful future, noting that Americans understand that “enduring security and lasting peace do not require perpetual war.”

Americans are “heirs to those who won the peace and not just the war, who turned sworn enemies into the surest of friends,” the president said. “And we must carry those lessons into this time as well.”

The president affirmed the nation’s resolve to defend its people and uphold its values through both the “strength of arms and rule of law” – and with an arm extended to its friends as well as adversaries to help lay conditions for long-term peace.

“We will show the courage to try and resolve our differences with other nations peacefully – not because we are naive about the dangers we face, but because engagement can more durably lift suspicion and fear,” he said.

Meanwhile, “America will remain the anchor of strong alliances in every corner of the globe,” he said. “We will renew those institutions that extend our capacity to manage crisis abroad, for no one has a greater stake in a peaceful world than its most powerful nation.”

The United States will support democracy around the world, “because our interests and our conscience compel us to act on behalf of those who long for freedom,” Obama said. “And we must be a source of hope to the poor, the sick, the marginalized, the victims of prejudice – not out of mere charity, but because peace in our time requires the constant advance of those principles that our common creed describes: tolerance and opportunity; human dignity and justice.”

Obama urged the nation to put partisanship aside and come together to support their universal ideals. “With common effort and common purpose, with passion and dedication, let us answer the call of history, and carry into an uncertain future that precious light of freedom,” he said.

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5. On Final Official Trip, Panetta Shares Legacy of Service (01-20-2013)

By Karen Parrish
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Jan. 20, 2013 – Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta returned here yesterday after concluding a six-day tour of European capitals that he has said was likely his last official trip in office.

Along the way, the secretary touched down in Portugal, Spain, Italy and Great Britain. In each country, he discussed Afghanistan; all of the nations Panetta visited over the week are coalition partners in NATO's International Security Assistance Force.

He also grappled with the Algerian hostage situation, and talked to troops, world leaders and reporters about budgets, strategies and the crucial nature of strong alliances in a world facing 21st century threats, including the invisible but nightmarish specter of computer-based attacks that could shut down the world's flow of money, energy and information.

Panetta also outlined a legacy, a vision and a dream: a legacy of service; a vision of resolute, committed global security cooperation; and a dream that he often says is not exclusively American, but simply human: a better life "for our children."

Panetta frequently speaks about public service, as he did to soldiers in Vicenza, Italy, Jan. 17, and to students who attended his speech at London's King's College Jan. 18.

The secretary started his own nearly half-century career in public service with a stint as an Army lieutenant, later representing his home state of California in Congress for 16 years. He was chief of staff and director of the Office of Management and Budget during Bill Clinton's presidency, and as part of President Barack Obama's administration has led both the CIA and the Defense Department.

Panetta has visited troops -- primarily U.S. forces, but also Japanese, Afghan, South Korean and British service members, among others -- on virtually all of his foreign and domestic travels as defense secretary, and his respect for the military people he leads is clear, as it was in Vicenza.

"The proudest thing that I do as secretary of defense is have the honor and the pride to serve and to lead the men and women in uniform who put their lives on the line every day for our country," he said to the soldiers of U.S. Army Europe's 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team. "A generation of young people since 9/11 who have come forward and been willing to serve this country and willing to fight and, yes, to die, has been a great tribute to the dedication of young people to what our democracy is all about."

Panetta told the students at King's College his love for democracy dates back to his formative memories of Monterey, Calif., during World War II. Born in 1938, he was too young, he explained, to understand all that was happening in the world.

"I can still remember the feelings of fear and uncertainty and vulnerability that pervaded those years," he said. "Blackout shades, the air raid drills, the paper drives, the soldiers and sailors who walked the streets of Monterey before they were sent off to battle. Those are all memories."

But his memories of that time also include some that seemingly still inspire him. The man who helped to bring down Osama bin Laden spoke warmly to the King's College crowd of his early impressions of Winston Churchill and Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Panetta perhaps displayed the roots of his own "no refuge" approach to terrorists as he described those leaders' resolve: "By making clear that they would accept nothing less than the total defeat of fascism, Roosevelt and Churchill were determined to shape a new world, and to do everything they could to ensure it would never again descend into total conflict," he said.

"Their stirring oratory, their personal friendship, their clear-eyed resolve inspired a generation at war and, I know, continue to inspire all of us today," he added.

Panetta likely will be remembered for some stirring oratory of his own. The former congressman has not been shy as defense secretary in exhorting his 21st century counterparts to carry out the duties they were elected to perform.

As he told the soldiers in Vicenza while discussing budget issues, "This is not an unsolvable problem. We can do this. People have just got to suck it up and ... take on some of the risks and take on some of the challenges that are required by people in leadership."

The secretary has taken on daunting challenges while leading the Pentagon. A war-weary force has struggled with high suicide and sexual assault rates. Insider attacks have tested the strength of the ISAF coalition. Constant budget uncertainty has strained the nation's defense industries and frustrated and worried military commanders, service members and the defense civilian workforce.

Panetta spoke about that last item at the National Press Club here in December, shortly after returning from a trip to Afghanistan.

"It's easy to get cynical and frustrated in this town," he admitted. "And after 40 years, I know my level of cynicism and frustration. But my confidence and my hope for the future is restored every time I have the opportunity to visit with our troops on the front lines, as I did last week. In them, I see the spirit of public service that has kept this country strong for more than two centuries and which has helped us to overcome every period of crisis and adversity in our history."

At that same event, Panetta also displayed some of the same empathy he showed in Vicenza, when a young soldier who had been standing in formation waiting for him -- likely for quite some time --

started to sway on her feet in the middle of the secretary's remarks. He stopped and gazed at her in concern as two fellow soldiers led her from the formation. "Are you all right, dear?" the leader of the world's mightiest military asked her.

At the press club in December, Panetta exhibited the same respect for others in discussing a far more serious situation. He paid tribute to a reporter who had suffered an explosive blast in Afghanistan, leaving her with a prosthetic left leg and a shattered right foot that had been pieced back together.

"Journalists who commit themselves to doggedly pursuing the truth and telling the everyday stories of American people are public servants in their own right," he said. "On my last trip, I was honored to be accompanied by Cami McCormick, an award-winning radio reporter for CBS News who three years ago suffered a terrible injury ... while covering the war in Afghanistan. It was truly an emotional experience to be with her as she returned back to Afghanistan for the first time after that injury. She put her own life at risk in order to tell the story of that war."

McCormick also accompanied Panetta on his European trip. She delighted in a photograph she took of the Roman Catholic secretary in Rome, after he attended a general audience with Pope Benedict XVI. In the photo, the secretary's grin is incandescent. "It's perfect Panetta," she said.

The secretary's legacy of public service reaches even into his years outside the Capital Beltway. Panetta and his wife, Sylvia, in 1997 founded the Panetta Institute for Public Policy at California State University, Monterey Bay. The institute, as its website details, serves the entire California state university system, and under the direction of Sylvia Panetta -- before his return to the national stage, the couple shared the job -- provides study opportunities in government, politics and public policy. The institute also sponsors other activities, such as the Monterey County Reads program, which recruits hundreds of reading volunteers from communities around Monterey to work with children in kindergarten through third grade.

The institute's mission, the secretary told his London audience, is to "help prepare the next generation for a career in public service." He added, "I look forward to returning to the institute, to ... my wife and family, and, yes, to our walnut farm."

But last week, Panetta's focus was far from Monterey. In Lisbon, in Madrid, in a Rome wracked by thunderstorms and a London slushy with snow, the secretary spoke of his vision: a NATO alliance retooled for a young century's new threats, ready to foster security alliances and military cooperation around the world.

"The goal of this trip is really in line with that," he told reporters traveling with him while en route to Lisbon. "It's to try to strengthen and reaffirm the transatlantic alliance, our relationship with NATO, to reflect on what we've accomplished over the last decade of war, and to also lay the groundwork for the future."

In Portugal, the secretary said the war on terrorism continues. "We have made good progress," he added. "We have undermined their ability to conduct the kind of attacks that they would like to conduct. But the war on terrorism continues."

In Italy, he noted that "this is the kind of war that's going to require continuing pressure over a period of time."

In Spain, he said efforts to implement the way forward in Afghanistan decided upon at a NATO summit in Chicago were continuing as the alliance members' leaders had hoped. "Because of the work that has been done by all the nations involved to help build the Afghan security forces, ... I believe we are on track to meet the goals that our nations agreed to last year in Chicago."

And in London, the secretary asserted, "NATO has been an unprecedented force for global security and prosperity, developing into the most effective and capable and enduring multilateral security alliance the world has ever seen."

During his previous travels -- 18 international trips over as many months leading the Defense Department -- Panetta has talked of a world that is united against threats, where relationships that are not alliances, as with China, can remain respectful and engaged, and where a common goal of peace and prosperity becomes not exclusively the American dream, but also a globally achievable objective.

Panetta famously credits his Italian parents, who brought him up on that walnut farm after immigrating to America with "no money and few skills," with instilling that dream in him and his brother. The Panetta sons were the first in their family to attend college, and then law school, he noted.

The secretary says openly he hopes to return soon to wife, family, farm and institute. He told the troops in Vicenza that when their turn comes to go home, "I hope ... you'll have the same deep sense of pride that I have in the service that we've provided this country. We don't make a hell of a lot of money in these jobs, but if we can have a sense that we have maintained our integrity and that we have given something back to this country that has given us so much, that's the best pay we could ever have."

His own greatest accomplishment, he told a soldier who asked, is "being a part of something that really, I think, in the end, helped all Americans and the whole world to be safer."

Biographies:

[Leon E. Panetta](#)

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[Panetta: Terrorists 'Will Have No Place to Hide'](#) (01-18-2013)

[6. Panetta Urges New Focus for NATO \(01-18-2013\)](#)

By Karen Parrish

American Forces Press Service

LONDON, Jan. 18, 2013 – As the International Security Assistance Force transitions to a sustaining role in Afghanistan by the end of 2014, will NATO retreat from its responsibilities, or innovate to develop and share the capabilities needed to meet growing, global security challenges?

Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta delivered a speech at King's College here today, built around that question.

The audience included students and faculty members of the school's Department of War Studies and the secretary noted it was "especially these young leaders" he wished to address.

The more than 60-year-old NATO alliance "remains the bedrock of America's global ... partnerships," Panetta said. "But today, after over 11 years of war, I believe we are at another turning point in the history of the transatlantic alliance."

NATO nations came together in 1949 to form a common defense against the monolithic Soviet superpower. Now, Panetta noted, the alliance -- if it is to remain an effective, capable, enduring multilateral security alliance -- must prepare to quickly respond to a wide range of security threats even as member nations, under budget pressures, spend less on their militaries.

"The bottom line is that no one nation can confront the threats ... alone," the secretary said. "We have got to build an innovative, flexible, and rotational model for forward-deployed presence and training."

In transforming its capabilities, NATO must develop innovative alliance cooperation, invest in new frontiers, and build regional partnerships, he said.

Innovative cooperation, Panetta said, involves positioning and equipping forces so they can respond to threats rapidly and effectively. For example, he noted, the Defense Department has moved two heavy Army brigades out of Europe.

"But ... this effort is not primarily about cuts," he said. "We will be supporting new rotational deployments, enhanced training and exercises, and other new initiatives that bolster the readiness of our forces and build their capacity to seamlessly work together."

The secretary listed some of those U.S. initiatives: deploying ballistic missile defense-equipped destroyers to Rota, Spain; establishing a new U.S. aviation detachment in Poland; and deploying U.S. Army battalions on a rotational basis to participate in the NATO Response Force.

"We are making tangible investments in these new forms of cooperation to make the alliance more responsive and more agile," the secretary said. "And we are doing so in a cost-effective way that meets our fiscal responsibilities."

Turning to "new frontiers," Panetta urged NATO commitment to cyber defense.

"For years, I have been deeply concerned by intellectual property theft, by attacks against private sector institutions, and the continued probing of military and critical infrastructure networks," he said. Panetta said cyber- attacks could "paralyze our economies" and potentially destroy national power grids, government systems, financial and banking networks.

"That technology is real and threatening today," Panetta said. "As societies that rely on cyberspace, Europe and the United States have more to gain from stronger cyber security than anyone else. And our economies are so interdependent; failing to act together could leave all of us dangerously exposed."

NATO must consider what its role should be in defending member nations from cyber attacks, the secretary said.

"We must begin to take the necessary steps to develop additional alliance cyber defense capabilities," he said. "To that end, I urge that in the coming year that NATO ministers hold a session to closely examine how the alliance can bolster its defensive cyber operational capabilities."

Other key capabilities for the future that require investment, Panetta said, include unmanned systems, surveillance and intelligence platforms, space defense and special operations forces.

"The time has come when nations can share critical capabilities ... that enhance our common ability to ... respond to common threats," he said.

Panetta said the third pillar for building the transatlantic alliance of the 21st century "must be a determined and proactive effort to build strong partnerships with nations and security organizations in other regions of the world."

The purpose of such an approach would not be to build a global NATO, Panetta said, but to help other regions provide for their own security and become more capable of partnering with NATO to meet global challenges.

"We see this every day in Afghanistan, where more than 20 non-NATO countries -- Australia, Jordan, others -- work alongside NATO countries in ISAF," he said. "And we saw the benefits of this approach in our Libya operation as well, where the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council partnered with Europe and North America under a NATO umbrella to protect the Libyan people. The presence of these regional partners has added credibility and capability to the alliance effort, and laid the groundwork for continued cooperation in the future."

And as NATO confronts other security challenges in Africa and the Middle East, Panetta recommended the establishment of "deeper partnerships with the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council and build regular dialogue, exchanges and exercises with African organizations such as the African Union and ECOWAS in Western Africa."

NATO also must broaden the scope of alliance security discussions beyond European and regional issues, the secretary said.

"In particular, I strongly believe that Europe should join the United States in increasing and deepening our defense engagement with the Asia-Pacific region," Panetta said.

The U.S. "pivot" to Asia has caused concern in Europe, he acknowledged.

"But today those concerns should be put to rest," Panetta said. "Global security is not a zero-sum game, but neither are the security commitments of the United States. More importantly, Europe's economic and security future is -- much like the United States' -- increasingly tied to Asia. After all, the European Union is China's largest trading partner, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' second-largest trading partner, and ranks third and fourth with Japan and South Korea."

It is in the interests of both the United States and Europe, the secretary said, for NATO to become more outwardly focused and engaged in strengthening Asian security institutions such as ASEAN.

"It is also in our interest to expand defense dialogue and exchanges with a full range of nations including China, where defense spending, according to one estimate, is projected to exceed the largest eight European nations combined, by 2015," the secretary said.

NATO member nations have a responsibility to demonstrate global leadership and to advance the ideals of peace and prosperity, he said.

"To that end, the United States and Europe should work together and ensure our efforts are coordinated through regular consultations between European and U.S. defense officials focused on Asia-Pacific security issues," Panetta said. "The bottom line is that Europe should not fear our rebalance to Asia, Europe should join it."

In NATO, the world has a model for how nations can come together to advance global peace and prosperity, he said, but the alliance "must be strong enough and bold enough to change."

The secretary said after spending this week in Southern Europe, and continuing to deal with budget uncertainty at home, "I am very clear-eyed about the fiscal pressures nations are facing."

NATO nations are facing a crisis, Panetta said. "But we must never allow any crisis to undermine our collective resolve," he said.

As he prepares to retire from a career in public service, the secretary said he recognizes a generational shift is underway.

"There will probably not be another U.S. secretary of defense with direct memories of World War II," he said. "Many of those entering military service today -- and many of the young students here in this audience -- were born years after the fall of the Berlin wall. Yet across the generations, the transatlantic alliance remains the rock upon which we will build our future security and our future prosperity."

Panetta said his generation's mission was to secure a better and safer life for their children.

"That is now your mission and your responsibility," he told the students in the audience. "History will ultimately define our legacy, for better or for worse. Your job is now to make your own legacy. The future security of nations in the 21st century rests on whether you decide to fight together or fight separately. That decision rests with all of you."

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[Leon E. Panetta](#)

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